

# Who is Afraid of the Rise of China? – Economic, Geopolitical, and Ideological Factors

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# Measures of Perceptions of China's Rise

## Measure I

Q156. Which country has the most influence in Asia? (1) China (2) Japan (3) India (4) United States (5) Other.

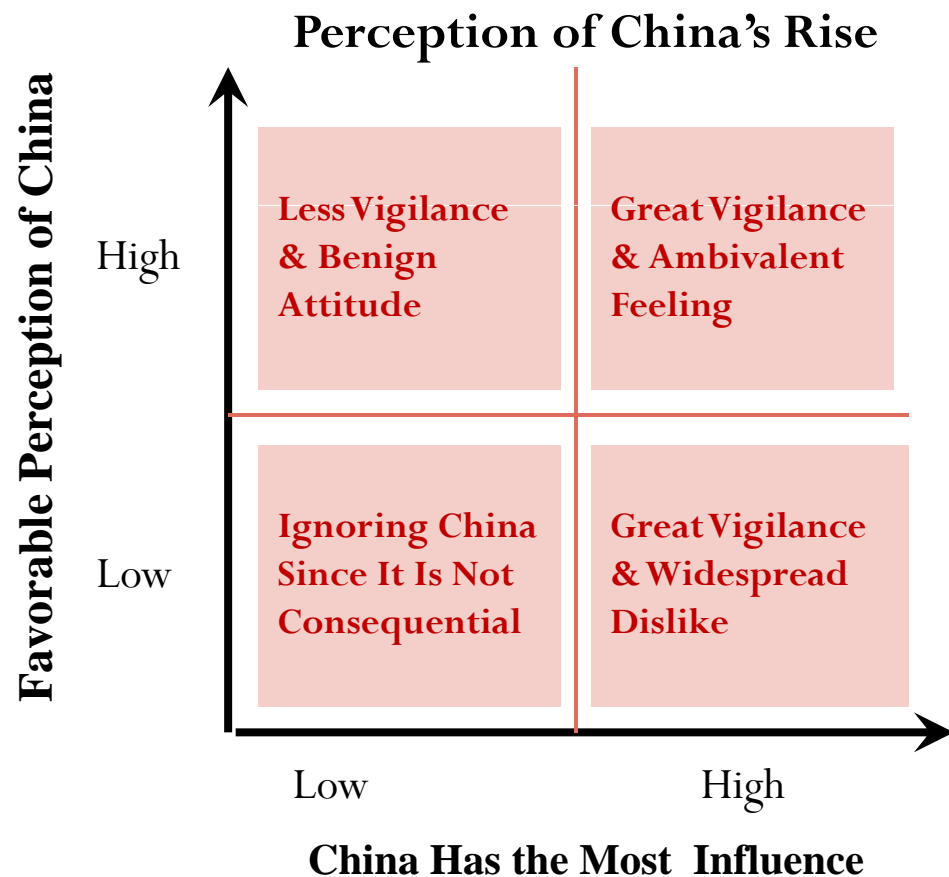
## Measure II

q157 and q157a . Whether the respondent thinks China do more good than harm, regardless their answers in q156.

Taking the percentage of positive responses for both variables, we can spot each country's location in the first quadrant as a meaningful measure of perceptions of China's rise.

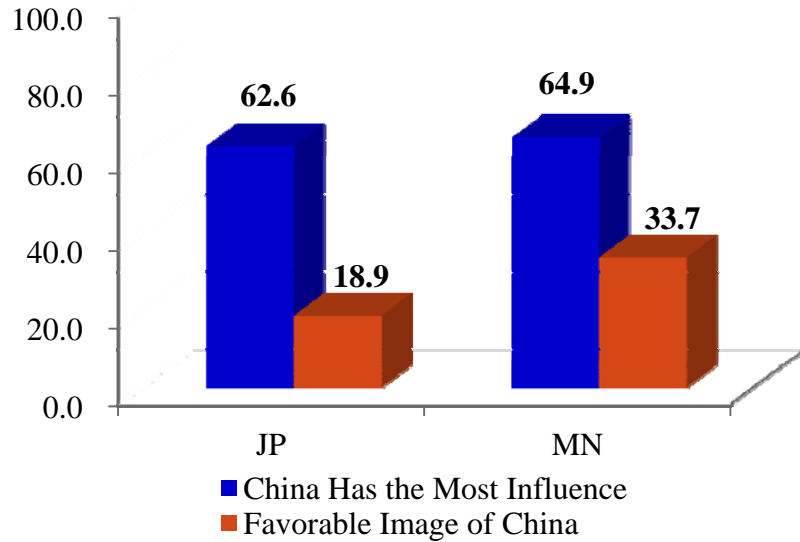
Measure I: China has the most influence

Measure II: Favorable Image of China

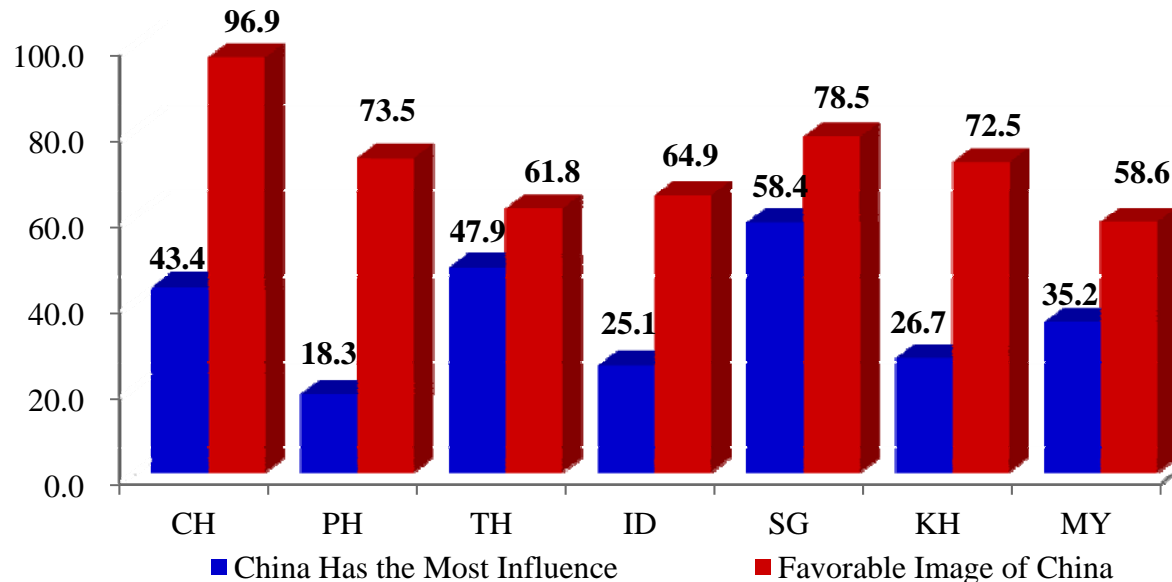
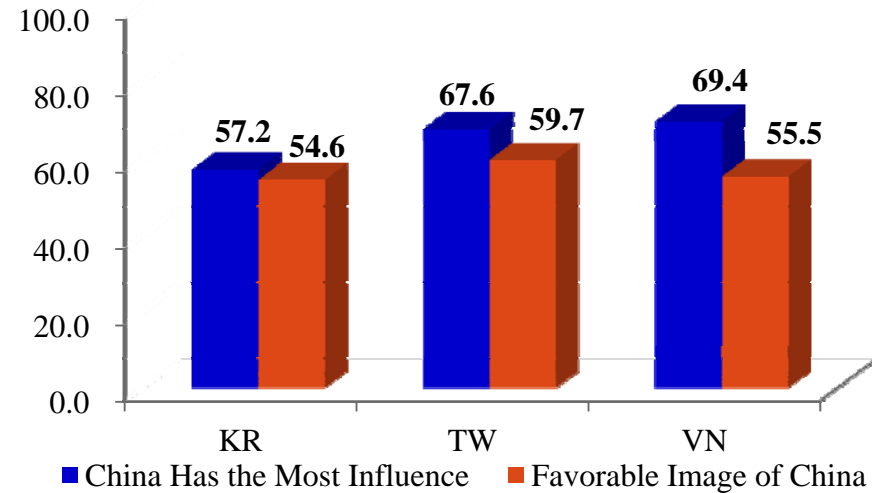


# Divergent Perceptions of China's Rise

## Great Vigilance & Widespread Dislike



## Great Vigilance & Ambivalent Feeling



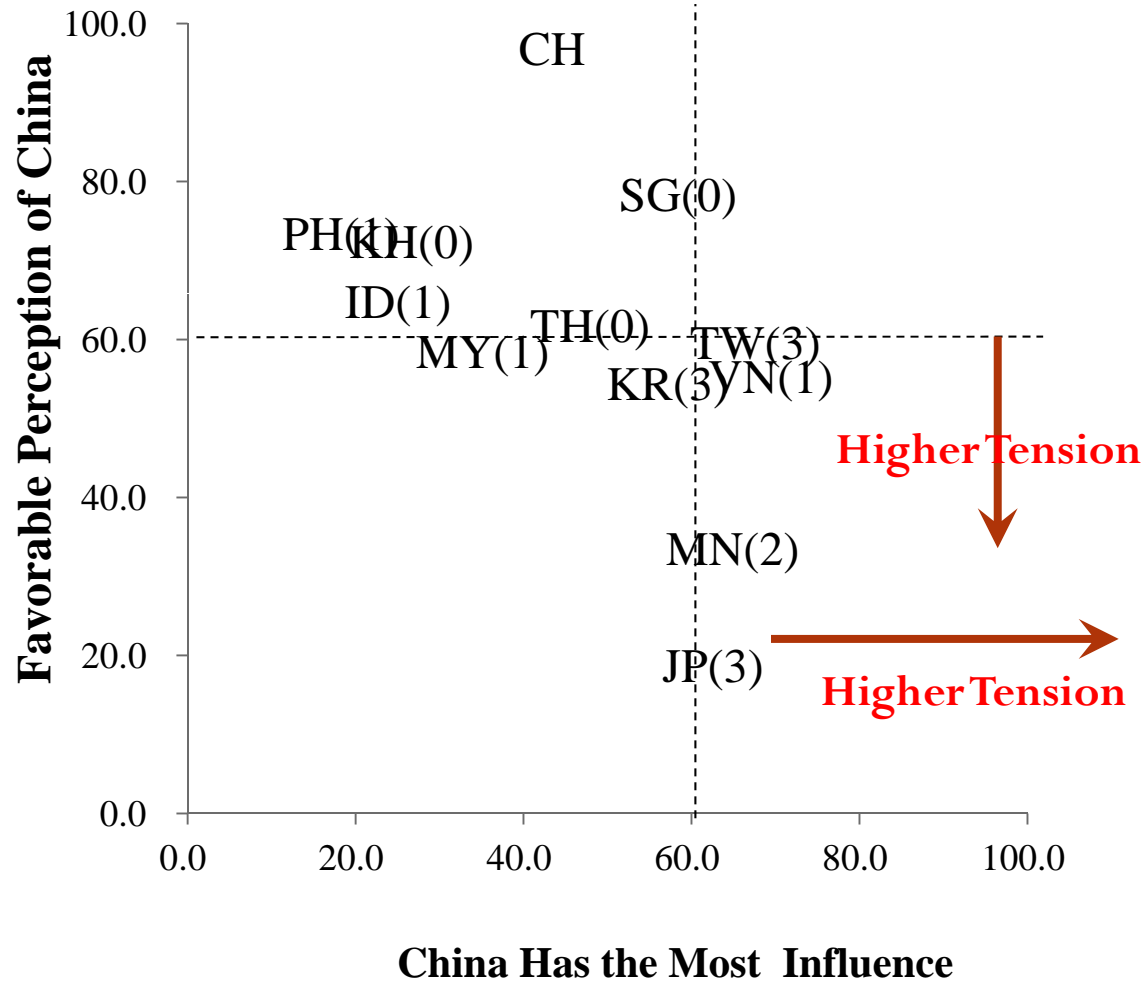
## Less Vigilance & Benign Attitude

Except China, these countries are all non-adjacent Southeast Asian Countries

# How Can We Explain Such Divergent Perceptions?

## Plausible Factor I: Geopolitical Tensions

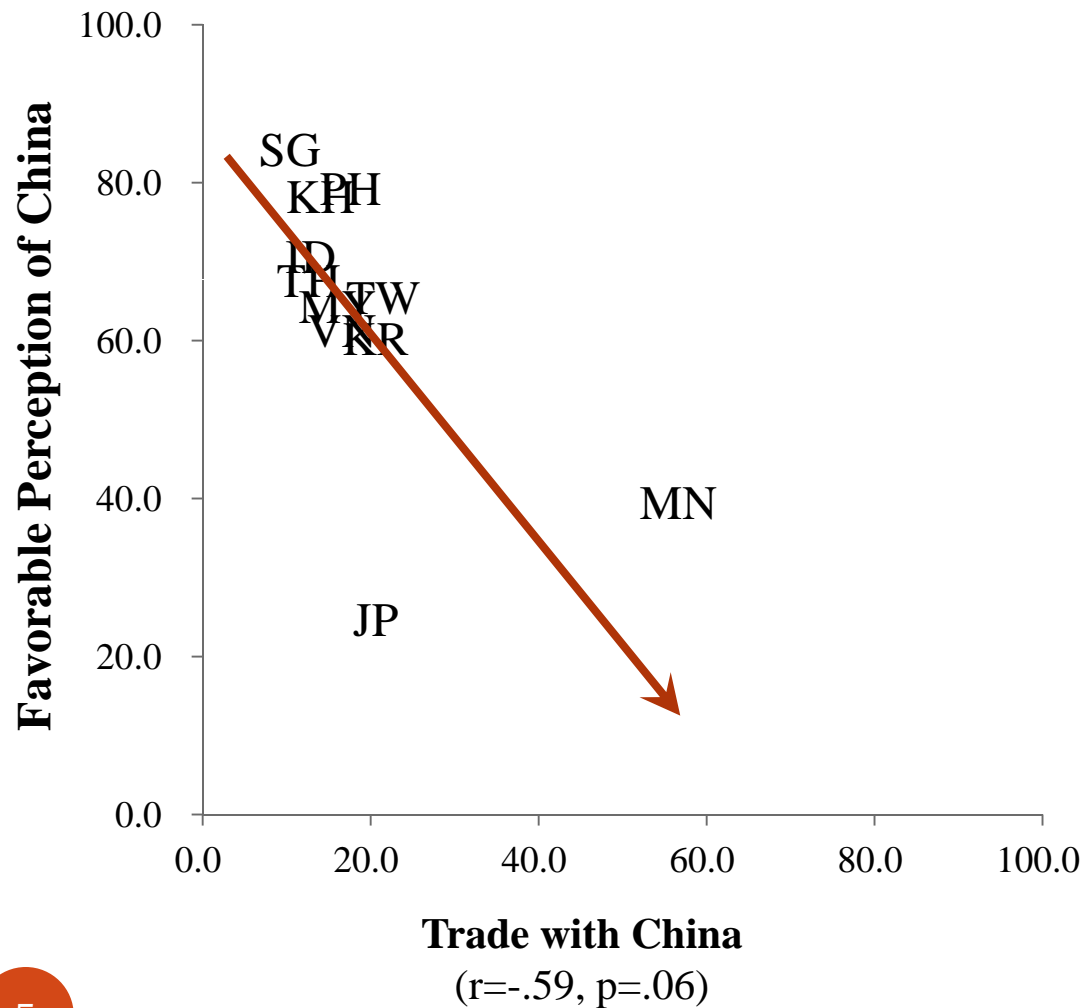
Geopolitical Tension: defined as a composite indicator comprising  
 (1) Non-ASEAN plus One  
 (2) Warring Experience  
 (3) Regime Similarity



	(1)	(2)	(3)	Geopolitical Tension
Japan	1	1	1	3
Korea	1	1	1	3
Mongolia	1	0	1	2
Philippines	0	0	1	1
Taiwan	1	1	1	3
Thailand	0	0	0	0
Indonesia	0	0	1	1
Singapore	0	0	0	0
Vietnam	0	1	0	1
Cambodia	0	0	0	0
Malaysia	0	0	1	1

# How Can We Explain Such Divergent Perceptions?

## Plausible Factor II: Economic Interdependence



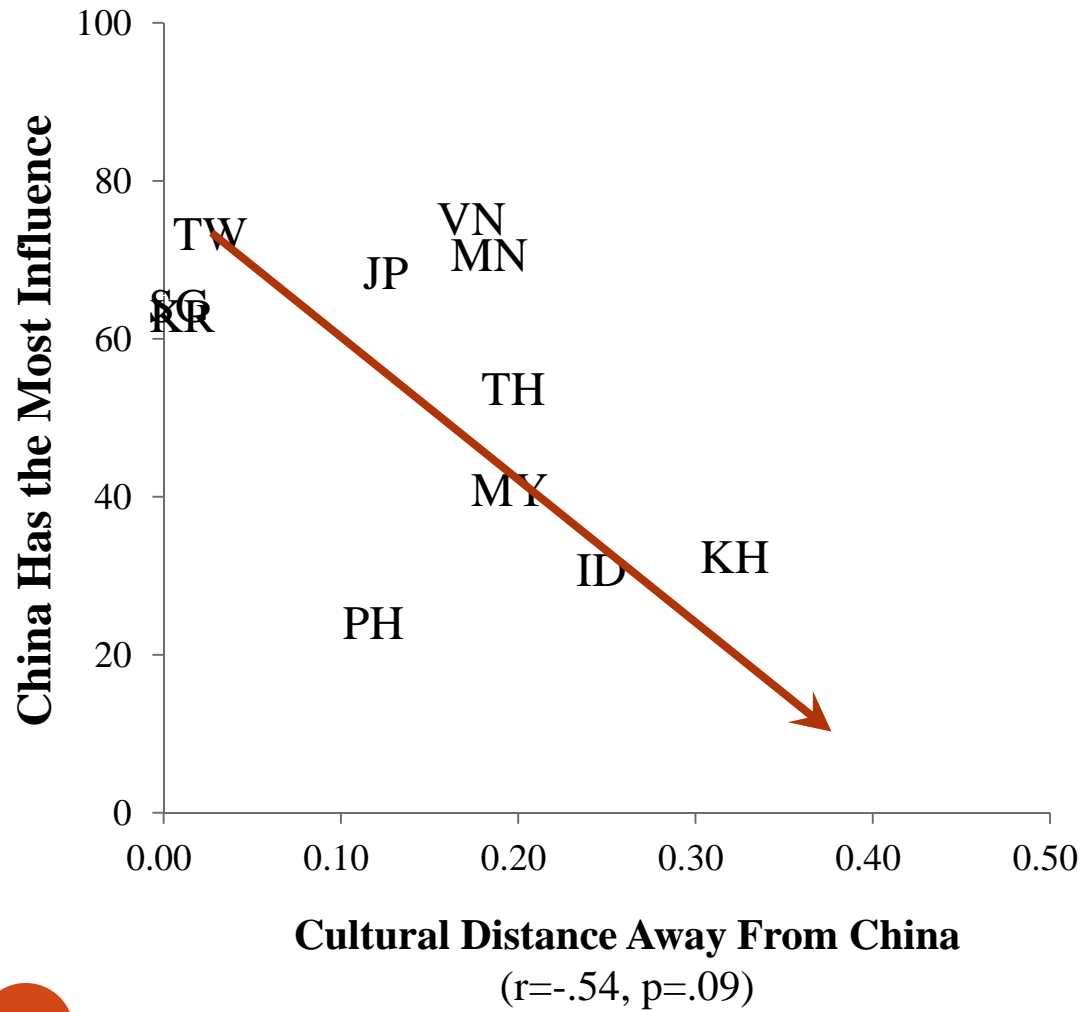
Economic Interdependence: defined as the average percentage of bilateral export and import with China in proportion to the overall export and import volume, respectively.

	Export	Import	Trade*
Japan	19.70	21.50	20.61
Korea	24.40	16.50	20.57
Mongolia	92.10	30.70	56.66
Philippines	21.30	14.60	17.62
Taiwan	28.10	14.20	21.50
Thailand	12.00	13.40	12.64
Indonesia	11.30	14.80	12.88
Singapore	10.40	10.40	10.40
Vietnam	11.00	22.00	16.57
Cambodia	1.20	23.90	14.04
Malaysia	17.90	13.70	16.05

\*value of bilateral/value of the overall trade, CIA World factbook (est. 2011)

# How Can We Explain Such Divergent Perceptions?

## Plausible Factor III: Cultural Distance



Cultural Distance: defined as the level of cultural difference in view of Chinese traditional social values, including the following dimensions:

- (1) Collectivism (vs. Individualism)
- (2) Long-term Prospect of Interest (vs. Self-Interest)
- (3) Filial Piety
- (4) Respect for Authority
- (5) Conflict Avoidance
- (6) Fatalism
- (7) Gender Bias

	Cultural Distance
Japan	0.13
Korea	0.01
Mongolia	0.18
Philippines	0.12
Taiwan	0.03
Thailand	0.20
Indonesia	0.25
Singapore	0.01
Vietnam	0.17
Cambodia	0.32
Malaysia	0.20

# Putting Things Together

## Multilevel Analysis on Perception of China

Covariates	China's Rise	Favorable Image
<b>Individual-level effects</b>		
Economic Satisfaction	no significant result	no significant result
Democratic Evaluation of China	no significant result	.222(.057) **
Openness Attitude	no significant result	.178(.071) *
Liberal Orientation	.100(.040) *	-.137(.059) *
Education	.157(.050) *	no significant result
Age	no significant result	no significant result
Male	.109(.036) *	.068(.028) *
<b>Contextual Effects</b>		
Intercept	no significant result	no significant result
Geopolitical Tension	no significant result	-.786(.112) **
Trade with China	no significant result	-.387(.087) **
Cultural Distance	no significant result	-.610(.097) **
Sample Size	11006	10169

Note: Entry is standardized beta coefficients.

## Conclusion

- Whether Asians subjectively recognize China's rise is better explained by individual-level demographic variables that associate with greater interest in political affairs.
- Neither the contextual variables have significant explanatory power, nor do economic, cognitive, and ideological factors matter at the individual level.
- However, contextual factors are found strongly related to people's evaluation of China's influence.
- Geopolitical tension and cultural distance are powerful contextual factors undermining the image of China.
- Economic interdependence also seems to increase political fear for a strong China and thus reduce favorable perception of China across Asian countries.